

October 11, 2002

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS**

NOTICE

Please be advised that the Court has issued an important revision of the Local Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure ("LBR"), which became effective on October 1, 2002. These revised Local Rules and its Appendices are posted to the Court's web site at <http://www.txeb.uscourts.gov>.

These revisions are primarily designed to implement the filing of documents with the Court by electronic means. New LBR 5005 authorizes electronic filing and you should carefully review new Appendix 5005 which sets forth the proper procedures applicable to electronic filing. You should already be aware that filing by electronic means is only available to those attorneys (and their staffs) who have successfully completed a brief course of training provided by the Bankruptcy Clerk. Please check the Court's website for further information on training classes. For those who have already completed the training, authorizations will soon be forthcoming from the Clerk.

Other significant changes to the Local Rules include the following:

A. Redaction of certain personal identifiers from schedules, proofs of claim, and pleadings is now required. **[LBRs 1007(c), 3002(b), and 9013(d)]**. Please note, however, that, while a debtor's social security number must be redacted on most documents, the full nine-digit social security number must still be provided on any bankruptcy petition. **[LBR 1005]**.

B. Whether filed on paper or by electronic means, the Clerk will be retaining documents solely by electronic means and paper files will no longer be maintained nor available for inspection by the public. Further, a party filing any document will have fifteen (15) days from the date of docketing to confirm that such document has been accurately submitted into the electronic file. **[LBR 5003]**. Reaffirmation agreements containing parties' signatures or affidavits pertaining to claim objections filed under Judge Parker's 20-day negative notice procedure, if filed electronically, must be retained by the Electronic Filer **[Appendix 5005]**.

C. The section on "responsive pleadings" **[LBR 9014(b)]** should be carefully reviewed. In order that the scope of responsive pleadings might be narrowed and more particularly defined in anticipation of electronic filing system, counsel should become familiar with the significance of the terms "objection," "response," and "comment" and the impact which those distinct terms have upon the scheduling of a hearing on any matter.

D. Service of pleadings to the United States Trustee has been expanded in Chapter 12 and Chapter 13 cases to include designated documents pertaining to the review of professional fees. **[LBR 2002(e)]**.

E. Attorneys should update their form pleadings to incorporate revisions to applicable negative notice provisions. **[LBRs 3015(d), 4001(a), 4003(b), and 9007(a)]**.

James D. Tokoph
Clerk, United States Bankruptcy Court
Eastern District of Texas